

NEW JERSEY

2000-2001
Guidelines and
Application



BEST PRACTICES

Deadline for Application to County Office:
NOVEMBER 27, 2000

The Best Practices application is a public document. The information that you provide will serve as the official record. Review the application prior to submission to ensure accuracy and adherence to the guidelines. Type or keyboard information requested on this page and page 2, if applicable.

Category	<u>Early Childhood Education</u>	(Application is limited to one category. See page 3 for details.)
Practice Name	<u>Chalk and Challenges Backpacks for Learning</u>	
Number of Schools with Practice	<u>1</u>	(If more than one school or district, read and complete information on page 2.)

County	<u>Camden</u>		
District (Proper Name)	<u>Berlin Township</u>		
Address	Street/P. O. Box <u>225 Grove Avenue</u> <u>08091</u> City <u>West Berlin, New Jersey</u> Zip Code		
Telephone	<u>856-767-9480</u>	Fax <u>856-768-8235</u>	Email
Chief School Administrator	<u>Mr. Howard Paynter</u>		
Nominated School #1 (Proper Name)	<u>John F. Kennedy</u>		
Address	Street/P. O. Box <u>228 Mt. Vernon Avenue</u> City <u>West Berlin, New Jersey</u> <u>08091</u> Zip Code		
Telephone	<u>856-767-9036</u>	Fax <u>856-768-9066</u>	Email
Principal	<u>Mrs. Linda Gallagher</u>		
Program Developer(s)	<u>Mrs. Carol Szabo and Mrs. Janet Jennison</u>		
Application Prepared By	<u>Carol Szabo, Jan Jennison, Linda Gallagher</u>		
Chief School Administrator's or Charter School Lead Person's Signature	<u>Howard Paynter</u>		

FOR USE BY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ONLY	
Approved: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	County Superintendent's Signature <u>David R. [Signature]</u>

NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
2000-2001 APPLICATION

Application Requirements: Failure to comply with the procedures for submission of the application will result in the elimination of the application.

- RESPONSES** to the information and the statements below must be **ANONYMOUS** and **ACCURATE**. No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school(s) or community. Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in referring to the applicant in responding to the statements
- USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM** on pages 1, 2 (if applicable), and 4. Do not include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.
- Application must be **keyboarded on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper, portrait format. Twelve-point or larger computer font or fourteen-pitch or larger typewritten font must be used.** (This sentence is in twelve-point Times New Roman.)
- KEYBOARDED RESPONSES** to all the statements below must be **no more than a total of four pages.** Keyboard and number the statement followed by the response. Format your response for accuracy and clarity.
- The information on page 4 and the responses to statements must be copied on one side of the page. The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable) must be copied on one side of the page. Staple pages 1, 2 (if applicable), 4, and the keyboarded responses together, in that same order.
- The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.
- The original and seven copies of the application must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by November 27, 2000, with the Itemized List of District Applications form. Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:		
Type of School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary School <input type="checkbox"/> Middle School <input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School <input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Grade Levels <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Practice Name <u>Chalk and Challenges</u> Backpacks for Learning Number of Schools with Practice <u>1</u> Number of Districts with Practice _____ Location <input type="checkbox"/> Urban/City <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban With Urban Characteristics <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Small City/Town <input type="checkbox"/> Rural

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts (Visual and Performing Arts) <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment/Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual Education and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship/Character Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Education Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Support/Guidance and Counseling Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Gifted and Talented Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Physical Education <input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <input type="checkbox"/> Public Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe Learning Environment <input type="checkbox"/> School-to-Careers/Workplace Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education <input type="checkbox"/> World Languages

- Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.
- List the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards*, including the *Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards*,* addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.
- Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.
- Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

*The 1996 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/education>.

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.

"Teachers can change lives with just the right mix of chalk and challenges."-Joyce A. Myers

This quote motivated us to create our "Chalk and Challenges Backpacks for Learning" program. The practice contains a mix of chalk and challenges that create a unique home-school connection. Each backpack is filled with literature, manipulatives, art supplies, puppets, puzzles, or any number of "Chalk and Challenges." Kindergarten students eagerly await their turn to share the varied activities in the backpacks with their families.

Program objectives are three-fold:

- (a) To develop an innovative approach that educates parents on how to be a successful facilitator for their child's learning. Many parents are looking for some direction on how to help their child. The backpacks take the guesswork out.
- (b) "Chalk and Challenges Backpacks for Learning" actively engage children and guide their families through sound curriculum-based learning activities in the comfort of their homes. As stated in several "Research Bulletins" (Thorkildsen, Stein, 1998 and Epstein, 1997), "Parents need strong on-going support from schools to provide effective parent involvement."
- (c) Based on Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligence, we have developed twenty backpacks providing a variety of materials and manipulatives that yield learning through multiple means.

The backpacks, which children take home once a month for a week, encompass the skills of our literacy, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies programs. The "Chalk and Challenges" activities directly correlate to our curriculum and New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards but are flexible and varied enough to meet individual needs.

Generally, each backpack is filled with the following items:

- A family home letter – this letter contains a list of the backpack's contents and explains the purpose of the backpack
- Manipulatives and Activity Cards – specific activities for the given manipulatives
- Books
- Story tapes
- Stuffed animal puppets and or story props – these relate to the specific literature
- Games
- Folder with paper
- Pencil bag with chalk, scissors, pencils and a glue stick
- Journal
- Follow-up Home Activity Cards – these cards offer specific activities that can be done at home after the backpacks return to school. Parents may keep these activities for reference. These activities show that learning can continue with common items found in children's homes
- A Parent Evaluation Form

The reason our practice is so successful is that the approach is clever, marketable and innovative. Our clever little backpacks travel back and forth and bridge the gap between home and school. They are marketable because they are teacher-made and child-tested. The classic literature and the materials which encourage multiple intelligence learning are both parent friendly and child appealing. They are innovative because they are fluid. As the child grows, the

backpacks evolve to meet new educational, social, and emotional needs. This practice could readily be adapted to address Early Childhood through Middle School topics and skills. Additionally, this practice provides a balance between the simple, tools in the backpacks and the everyday household the complexities of our high-tech, computer driven world.

Research indicates that educators need to develop a strong home/school partnership if we are to assure positive and long lasting student achievement. As one parent that used one of the traveling backpacks so enthusiastically wrote, "We can't wait to have another backpack." Thank you for helping me help my little boy." The most valuable gift we can give someone is our time. In today's busy world using "Chalk and Challenges Backpacks for Learning" gives kids and parents that very special time together. Read what two families had to say about their experience with the Traveling Backpacks: "My children and I enjoyed working together with the bag. My son showed us all the different letters and sounds he has learned. We would name different things for each letter. My younger daughter loved being included in the activities. It made her feel very knowledgeable, since she did well with letter recognition and my son did well sharing. It was great to sit down and have fun learning with them and for all of us to be able to participate. Thank you"

"My son really liked the fish game. He got to cut all by himself and played a few times after we played. I would not mind having it sent home a second time (after everyone has had a turn). We didn't get a chance to do the extension activities. He liked repeating the fishing game book and rhyming cards. I liked the way it has ways to build upon a extend their skills."

2. List the specific Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, *addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.

"Chalk and Challenges Backpacks for Learning" can be made to address almost any New Jersey Core Content Curriculum Standard. In our project, the twenty backpacks are most representative of language arts literacy and mathematics however, social studies, science and health and physical education are also addressed. Twelve backpacks address language arts literacy standards; four address math standards; two address social studies standards; two address health and physical education standards; and two address science standards.

- Four alphabet backpacks (3.1, 3.2, 3.4)
- Four rhyming backpacks (3.1, 3.2, 3.4)
- Two writing backpacks (3.3, 3.5)
- Two numeration backpacks (4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.10, 4.11, 4.14)
- Two classification backpacks (4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.10, 4.11, 4.14)
- Two literature backpacks (3.4, 3.5)
- Two social studies backpacks (6.7, 6.8, 6.9)
- Two fine motor backpacks (2.5)
- Two science backpacks (5.2)

Specifically in the "ABC Chalk and Challenges Backpack" the family will discover: a chalkboard and chalk, ABC puzzle, magnetic letters and board, playdough, pipe cleaners, ABC flip book, ABC book, Frog game, ABC Hunt manipulatives, puppet, ABC Rock tape, Home Extension activity cards, instruction and comment cards, sand tray, journal, ABC coloring book. These elements are used for activities to explore early reading readiness. (Language Arts Literacy Standard)

3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.

Data on the success of the backpacks program spans two years and utilizes three assessment measures: parent questionnaire, parent evaluation form, and documenting throughout the year student academic growth via rubrics and performance assessment.

Parent Questionnaire

Parents are asked to contribute specific background information about their child. Composite results give us information about the typical child entering kindergarten. We have learned the following about our student population:

- (1) Parents are unsure how to best help their child be successful in school
- (2) Parents request appropriate learning materials, such as books, games
- (3) Many don't have access to age appropriate printed and or learning materials
- (4) Children come with limited general knowledge
- (5) Children have short attention spans
- (6) Children don't get read to on a regular basis
- (7) Children don't attend pre-school

Parent Evaluation



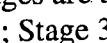
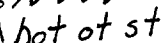


This basic questionnaire is two fold. It yields information on how the backpack best meets the parents needs in their role as educators. It also evaluates the child in terms of their skills.

The Response Activity Rubric

Students are asked to draw a picture and write or tell about the plot of the selected story. The teacher assesses the efforts of each student using a 3 point scale. The score of "3" indicates excellent comprehension. The child's writing demonstrates competence in the command of letters and letter/sound relationships. The drawing accurately depicts the story line. The score of "2" can be thought of as adequate comprehension. The child's writing indicates the beginning development of sound symbol relationships. The child's drawing reasonably depicts the story line. The score of "1" can be thought of as minimal comprehension. The child's writing has no letter - like form or no writing at all. The drawing minimally depicts the story line.

For both years, a beginning of the year response activity rubric shows that 80% of the students fall in the "1" range and 0% in the "3" range. End of the year rubrics show only 5% of the population in the "1" range; 55% in the "2" range; and 40% in the "3" range.

Children's Writing Samples

Teachers designate the developmental stage of each student's writing. Writing samples are done periodically throughout the year. The developmental stages are assessed 1-6: Stage 1 scribbling  ; Stage 2 linear, repetitive drawing  ; Stage 3 letter-like forms  ; Stage 4 letter and early word symbol relational  ; Stage 5 inventive spelling  ; and Stage 6 standard spelling  .

In September, the kindergarten population for both years showed 15% in Stage 1, 55% in Stage 2, 25% in Stage 3, 5% in Stage 4 and 0% in Stages 5 or 6. By the end of the year, results show no one in Stage 1, 15% in Stage 2, 40% in Stage 3, 40% in Stage 4 and 5% in Stage 5.

The positive results of these assessment measures are attributed in part to the use of the "Chalk and Challenges Backpacks for Learning." They have become an integral part of extending and enriching the kindergarten day.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

Replication is creative, rewarding and fun. We started with \$500.00 from a McDonald's Outstanding Classroom Award which yielded enough money to develop our original twenty backpacks. We determined what specific needs/content standards we wished to address. We then set out to purchase or obtain at yard sales etc. anything we could to make our backpacks unique. (Of course, not everyone loves yard sales! Educational supply houses would suffice.)

Parents are asked if they would like to participate in the program. Explanation in detail is provided during a Back-to-School workshop. Simple record keeping assures all children receive a turn at the various backpacks throughout the year, or the backpacks that most meet their individual needs. The parent evaluation forms are reviewed as the backpacks are returned, and modifications are made accordingly.